Centre Pompidou-Metz

PRESS KIT

Shigeru Ban

Building a Better World

05.12.26 - 30.08.27



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COVER: Cardboard Cathedral, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2013 / Photo: © Stephen Goodenough

1.
INTRODUCTION

SHIGERU BAN. BUILDING A BETTER WORLD

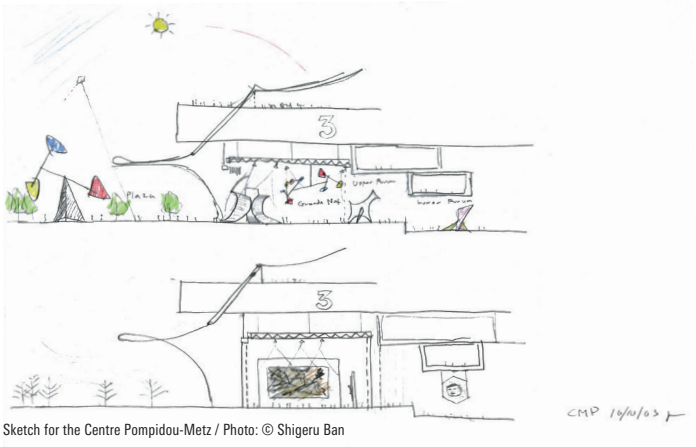
5 December 2026 – 30 August 2027
Galerie 3, Forum and Paper Tube Studio
Curator and exhibition designer: Shigeru Ban

Sixteen years after the opening of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, Shigeru Ban takes over the museum he designed with Jean de Gastines to showcase over forty years of architecture: from early experiments to major cultural buildings, from emergency structures in the wake of disasters to explorations of wood, paper, and recyclable materials, the exhibition reveals an architectural vision of remarkable coherence.

For Building a Better World, Shigeru Ban personally oversees both the curation and the scenography. In a rare occurrence, the architect thus presents his work from within one of his own creations. The Centre Pompidou-Metz becomes at once the venue, the subject, and one of the experiences of the exhibition: a dialogue between a building, its architect, and a philosophy that has never separated constructive invention from responsibility and care for those who inhabit the architecture.

For Shigeru Ban, building a museum, a house, a school, a cathedral or a temporary shelter does not belong to different worlds. The same question runs through his action and his thought: how to build in a way that meets the needs of those who will inhabit the architecture?

Through models, drawings, prototypes, photographs, films and full-scale devices, Building a Better World invites visitors to step into Shigeru Ban's way of thinking, designing, and acting. The exhibition shows how architectural experimentation can become a collective practice, capable of responding to the transformations of the world without ever sacrificing beauty, invention or functionality.



Sketch for the Centre Pompidou-Metz / Photo: © Shigeru Ban

The story continues beyond the exhibition. In September 2027, its closure will be marked by the opening of the Paper Dome, one of the modules of the Blue Ocean Dome designed by Shigeru Ban for the 2025 Osaka World Expo. Installed in the Triangle Nord, near the museum, it will host the *École du Centre Pompidou-Metz*.

In dialogue with the Centre Pompidou-Metz building and with the Paper Tube Studio, located in the Jardin Sud (South Garden), the Paper Dome permanently establishes three architectural works by Shigeru Ban in Metz. A unique ensemble to discover his body of work and philosophy, crowned by the most prestigious international distinctions, including the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2014, the Praemium Imperiale in 2024 and the Gold Medal 2026 from the American Institute of Architects.

A profoundly humanist architect

From the Forum onwards, the exhibition presents an essential dimension of Shigeru Ban's work: the architecture he has been developing since 1995 with populations affected by the disasters of war and natural catastrophes. In collaboration with communities and local stakeholders, he designs shelters, housing, schools, places of worship, and collective spaces.

The Centre Pompidou-Metz brings together full-scale constructions and models of projects carried out in various parts of the world: the Paper Log House, designed after the 1995 Kobe earthquake, whose cardboard tube walls rest on beer crates filled with sandbags; a shelter for Rwandan refugees in 1999; a classroom built in Chengdu Hualin, China, after the 2008 earthquake; the Aquila Temporary Concert Hall (Italy) and the Onagawa Container House (Japan), built in 2011 after devastating earthquakes; and the model of the Cardboard Cathedral, built in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2013, combining cardboard tubes, shipping containers, and an innovative glass treatment process that recreates the effect of stained glass. Paper, cardboard, containers, and locally available materials: the simplicity of the materials used in the construction of these buildings is never synonymous with poverty. Instead, it becomes a constructive possibility.

For this commitment, awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice in 2017, architectural theorist Riichi Miyake described Shigeru Ban as the "Doctor Without Borders of architecture" for his work.

Through these projects, Shigeru Ban demonstrates that lightweight, demountable architecture, built from locally available resources, can respond to the most critical situations with great ingenuity. His approach is based on a constant conviction: even in emergencies, architecture must preserve the privacy and dignity of its inhabitants.

The power of drawing: a process made visible

In Gallery 3, the exhibition explores the architect's enduring achievements through an exceptional collection of sketches, models, architectural details, design objects, documentaries, and photographs tracing the development of his work, from his student projects (many of which are being shown for the first time) to his most recent creations. The "Emergence of Form" section brings together several hundred drawings by Shigeru Ban, displayed on a wall that reveals his creative process. Created by hand, these drawings serve as the starting point for each of his buildings and demonstrate a practice in which sketching remains the primary design tool, predating any use of digital tools. This exceptional collection reveals the importance of handwork in Shigeru Ban's practice and allows us to follow the evolution of an idea, from initial intuitions to its translation into a model and then into architecture.

A scenography conceived by Shigeru Ban as an ode to light

Shigeru Ban designed the exhibition himself. From the moment they enter, visitors are greeted by the same light that Ban envisioned for his own home. This light illuminates a vast colonnade of cardboard tube arches that spans Gallery 3. Small models are nestled within the structure, while larger-scale projects unfold across the space. Between the columns, light and shadow shift as visitors move through the exhibition. This attention to light, and the continuity between interior and exterior, is further emphasised by the outstanding opening of Gallery 3's large bay window. Offering a panoramic view of Metz Cathedral, whose ever-changing appearance from this vantage point in the museum is an optical experience in itself, it brings the city into the museum. The landscape observed through the immense window thus becomes an integral part of the visitor experience, creating a memorable encounter for all.

A constant commitment to the environment, balancing sustainability and impermanence

Experimentation with the cardboard tube, a material previously absent from architectural vocabulary, is one of the guiding threads of the exhibition. In collaboration with engineers, Shigeru Ban transformed it into a novel structural element, demonstrating that a simple, recyclable, and widely available material can open new avenues for architecture. This ingenuity characterises the architect's numerous projects worldwide, notably the Centre Pompidou-Metz, which illustrates his ability to combine traditional craftsmanship with engineering prowess, brought together in the innovative architectural system of its roof: a free-standing grid of interlocking laminated timber slats covered with a translucent textile membrane. The exhibition also presents his research on engineered wood, developed after the Centre Pompidou-Metz, one of the most ambitious expressions of which is the Swatch and Omega headquarters in Biel, Switzerland, one of the largest timber structures in the world. Another section is dedicated to La Seine Musicale in Paris, whose mobile solar sail moves on rails following the sun's path, demonstrating his growing commitment to renewable energy.

Far from opposing emergency architecture and permanent construction, Shigeru Ban's work is characterised by a profound continuity, guided by the life cycle of buildings, their modularity, the reuse of materials, and the reduction of waste. For him, ecology is the natural development of a thought that transforms into concrete practice. Like the woven bamboo hat that inspired the roof of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, the exhibition reveals an interweaving of materials, structures, and know-how, and reminds us that building is, above all, about caring for the world.

From Paper Tube Studio to Paper Dome: passing on knowledge

The story of Shigeru Ban and the Centre Pompidou-Metz, with this exhibition, continues to grow and unfold across the city.

During the design of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, the Paper Tube Studio (PTS) served as Shigeru Ban's workshop, located on the 5th floor terrace of the Centre Pompidou in Paris between 2004 and 2009. Since 2020, this architecture of cardboard tubes has found a place in the South Garden of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, where it hosts participatory exhibitions.

On the occasion of Building a Better World, Shigeru Ban deploys his research around paper and cardboard structures. Young and old, alone or in groups, visitors are invited to experiment too, to imagine constructive solutions to concrete situations, and to question what architecture can contribute in social, political or human contexts.

The story continues beyond the exhibition

In September 2027, the Paper Dome, one of the modules of the Blue Ocean Dome designed for the Osaka World Expo in 2025, will arrive in Metz. Located in the Triangle Nord (Northern Triangle), it will house the *École du Centre Pompidou-Metz.*

Together with the Centre Pompidou-Metz and the Paper Tube Studio, three of Shigeru Ban's architectural works will engage in a dialogue on either side of the museum. At the heart of the Amphithéâtre district, they will create an architectural landscape where different scales, uses, and temporalities of his work can be experienced: the large cultural facility, the experimental workshop, and the place for learning and transmission.

Building a Better World, may not be about imagining an ideal world. It is rather about starting, very concretely, by building differently.

2.
BIOGRAPHY

Born in Tokyo in 1957, Shigeru Ban obtained a degree in architecture from Cooper Union in 1984. He founded Shigeru Ban Architects in 1985, and later opened offices in New York and Paris.

Since the beginning of his career, Shigeru Ban has been developing a unique structural system based in particular on the use of recycled paper, which he explores at different scales. This research is fully integrated with his commitment in the field: in 1995, he created the NGO Voluntary Architects' Network (VAN), through which he implements architectural solutions for populations affected by disasters, thus fully integrating humanitarian action into his architectural practice.

He has been awarded the rank of Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters (2014), the Pritzker Architecture Prize (2014), the Mother Teresa Prize for Social Justice (2017), the Princess of Asturias Award for Concord (2022), and the Praemium Imperiale for Architecture (2024).

Among his major works include the Centre Pompidou-Metz (2010, France), the Cardboard Cathedral (2013, New Zealand), La Seine Musicale (2017, France), the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre in Shizuoka (2017, Japan), the Tainan Art Museum (2019), SIMOSE (2023), and the Toyota City Museum (2024).

Since 2023, he has held the position of Special Visiting Professor at the Shibaura Institute of Technology. In March 2025, he was appointed a new member of the Japan Academy of Arts, and in October 2025, he was named a Person of Cultural Merit by the Japanese government. He received the 2026 Gold Medal from the AIA (American Institute of Architects), becoming the fourth Japanese architect to be awarded this distinction.

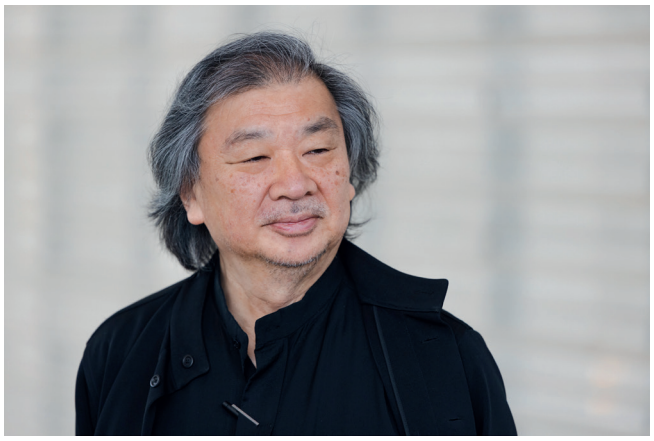


Photo: © Centre Pompidou-Metz / Romain Gamba / 2025

3. EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

Japanese architect Shigeru Ban – born in Tokyo in 1957 – has curated and conceived the exhibition design of his first retrospective in France, Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World. Sixteen years after the opening of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, he is thus showcasing his work in one of the buildings he himself designed. A monumental structure made of cardboard tubes runs through the exhibition: a form of architecture within architecture, it makes light, materials and construction the key elements of the visitor's itinerary.

After studying in the United States, Ban has developed, since 1984, an experimental approach to architecture. From cardboard to engineered timber, and from his earliest houses to major cultural venues, he has continuously explored new relationships between materials and structures, with a sustained focus on the life cycle of buildings, reuse of materials and economy of resources.

Since 1994 he has also been working with communities affected by war and natural disasters. Adapting materials and techniques to local resources and needs, he designs shelters, schools, hospitals, places of worship and community spaces. This approach, which has earned him the nickname "a Doctor Without Borders of architecture," is not a parallel undertaking but an integral part of his architectural philosophy and practice and a fundamental aspect of his daily life.

Like the woven bamboo hat that inspired the roof of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, this exhibition interweaves materials, structures, influences and uses. It shows us a form of architecture that constantly shifts the boundaries – between interior and exterior, natural and synthetic, temporary and permanent, urgent and long-term – while reminding us that building is also an act of caring for the world.



Haesley Nine Bridges Golf Clubhouse, Yeoju, South Korea, 2010 / Photo: © Hiroyuki Hirai

SHIGERU BAN BEFORE SHIGERU BAN

From his early years in Tokyo Ban learned architecture by building. Beginning his studies in 1976–1977, he created towers, arches and bridges, using paper, cardboard, wood, bamboo and matchsticks. His models and sketches, including one of Rietveld's chairs, already revealed a mindset centred on drawing, materials and assembly. In 1975 the discovery of John Hejduk's work in the magazine *a+u* changed the course of his life: he went to the United States to study under Hejduk, but first took classes at SCI-Arc in Los Angeles before moving on to the Cooper Union in New York. Hejduk instilled in him a design philosophy based on the composition of walls and a poetic approach to architecture. Ban returned to Japan in 1984 and two years later designed the layout for the Alvar Aalto exhibition presented by MoMA at the AXIS Gallery in Tokyo, where he used recycled cardboard tubes instead of wood. In 1994 his collaboration with Issey Miyake on the Miyake Design Studio (MDS) gallery in Tokyo took his explorations further: light filtered through the tubes became architecture, a precursor to the exhibition design at the Centre Pompidou-Metz.

CASE STUDY HOUSES

Starting in the late 1980s, Ban developed what he called "Case Study Houses", in reference to the experimental Californian programme of the 1950s. This programme combined innovative construction techniques with a new relationship between interior and exterior that echoed traditional Japanese housing: thus in Los Angeles he discovered an architectural style that indirectly acquainted him with his native culture. His early houses, such as the *Three Walls Studio* for an Architect, bear the stamp of John Hejduk, as can be seen in the three freestanding walls that define their spaces. With the *Nine Square Grid House*, Ban took up Hejduk's "nine squares" concept, even as he gradually shook off the latter's influence. The *Curtain Wall House* brought movable walls and modulated the relationship between interior and exterior, while in the *Wall-less House*, the walls disappeared completely, leaving movable partitions and furniture to define the space. Ultimately, in the *Picture Window House*, they clear the space in order to frame the landscape.

THE CARDBOARD TUBE REVOLUTION

From the mid-1980s onwards, Shigeru Ban experimented with cardboard tubes, a material until then unheard of in architecture. For the main hall of Japan's Odawara Festival in 1990, he insisted on using them instead of the timber requested by the client, on the grounds that "anyway, paper is itself made from wood". Lightweight, recyclable and readily available, cardboard particularly appealed to him because of its environmental qualities. As its use for structural purposes was not yet approved in any country in the world, Ban came up with a hybrid system by combining it with other materials. Together with the engineer Gengo Matsui, he studied cardboard's strength and modes of assembly, and in 1995 secured its certification for use in permanent constructions. The Japanese Pavilion at Hanover Expo 2000, designed with Frei Otto, demonstrated its potential on a large scale. Cardboard tubes, timber, and membranes formed a reticulated vault, demonstrating that monumental architecture can emerge from a minimum of material. Ban pursued this line of research across a range of projects, from the *Paper House* to the *Paper Studio*, while the building site itself became a place for experimentation and knowledge-sharing.

THE CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ: A TURNING POINT

Launched in 2003, the international competition for the Centre Pompidou-Metz was won by Shigeru Ban, Jean de Gastines and Philip Gumuchdjian. In the wake of their success, Ban and his students built the *Paper Temporary Studio* – a workshop made of cardboard tubes – on the terrace of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, where the Metz project was designed. The research conducted with Frei Otto in Hanover was further developed here: experiments with cardboard-tube gridshells informed a new investigation into timber structures. The heart of the museum in Metz consists of three overlaid tubular galleries, designed as adaptable exhibition spaces, all sheltered beneath a vast glued laminataed timber roof inspired by an Asian hat woven from bamboo. The interwoven structure of the roof is built around a central spire reaching 77 metres, a reference to 1977, the year the Centre Pompidou Paris was founded. This structure supports a flexible fibreglass membrane that diffuses a soft light. In contrast to the standard "white cube", the floor to ceiling windows blur the boundaries between interior and exterior, connecting the museum to its urban environment.

REINVENTING THE USE OF TIMBER

After the Centre Pompidou-Metz, Shigeru Ban pursued his exploration of engineered timber going well beyond traditional wood structures. Plywood, glued laminated timber and cross-laminated timber (CLT) open up new possibilities in structural design, within a broader context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and revitalising the Japanese forestry sector. At Haesley Nine Bridges golf club in South Korea bundles of glued laminated timber form a continuous, flower-like lattice. At the Tamedia office building in Zurich, a glass façade envelops a structure made entirely of timber that connects posts and beams without any metal fixings. At Yufuin in Japan, four curved glued laminated timber elements interstect to form Y-shaped columns, designed to be fabricated by local manufacturers. The Swatch headquarters in Bienne have taken this exploration to an exceptional scale, with a timber gridshell among the largest in the world. On this watchmaking campus, timber connects buildings serving different purposes. This research into cross-laminated timber (CLT) finds a new expression in the Lviv hospital, currently under construction and designed in the context of the war in Ukraine

ARCHITECTURE IN MOVEMENT

For Shigeru Ban the boundary between temporary and permanent is fluid:

"Even a building made of paper can be permanent if people love it. That's my definition of permanent and temporary." Several of his cardboard-tube buildings are still standing decades after their construction, the Nomadic Museum being a prime example: dismantled and reassembled in several cities, it combines cardboard tubes with shipping containers and adapts to each site. At La Seine Musicale, a music and performing arts centre in Paris, a mobile array of solar panels envelops the building, tracks the sun's path and maximises environmental potential. At the Simose Art Museum in Otake, Japan, eight exhibition halls on floating barges can be moved to adapt to the exhibition layout. In the *Blue Ocean Dome*, originally installed for the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo, three laminated bamboo domes are set to take on new lives: one of them, is now installed in the Northern Triangle of the Centre Pompidou-Metz to house its school, and joins the *Paper Tube Studio*, which has been located in the garden of the museum since 2020.

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

Among his many current projects Shigeru Ban continues to pursue an approach that runs through his entire body of work: experimenting with structure and materials while adapting each project to its context and intended use. In Altdorf, Switzerland, a timber concert hall fits seamlessly into the former shell of a 19th-century arsenal, its form meeting all the acoustic requirements and bridging the gap between contemporary architecture and heritage. In Antwerp, Belgium, Ban has pushed the use of timber as far as the façade of a high-rise building – an application still uncommon in the region. This project also centres around a Japanese-inspired garden, in which architecture and landscape converge. Finally, in Tirana, a tower combining retail outlets, offices and housing incorporates various typologies of Albanian architecture.

FROM ARCHITECTURE TO DESIGN

For Shigeru Ban, designing objects is not a peripheral activity but another field of experimentation in which materials, construction principles and uses can be put to the test on a different scale. Since the 1980s, he has been designing lighting, furniture and everyday items, of which the *L-Unit System* is a case in point: L-shaped components made of plywood (rather than steel) allow for the creation of a range of chairs and tables, while facilitating transport and reuse. Inspired by the work of Alvar Aalto, Ban revisited the principle of a single-piece curved wooden element – which replaces the traditional base-seat assembly – and transformed it into a modular system. Cardboard tubes – a signature material in his work – have also found a new life in furniture, as seen in the *Carta* collection and *Paper Taliesin*, a cardboard-tube reinterpretation of Frank Lloyd Wright's *Taliesin 2* lamp.

THE EMERGENCE OF FORM

The backs of the hundreds of reused sheets of paper covering this wall are all traces of Shigeru Ban's thought process which takes shape through drawing. Since childhood the pencil has been his primary tool and he draws almost obsessively: at home, in his studio or on a plane, his sketchbook is never out of reach. "I always come up with my designs in my head first. When I'm in bed and a good idea pops up, I can't sleep. So I get up, I draw, I get the idea down on paper." These thousands of sketches are not just part of the preliminary study stage. Drawing is part of the project throughout its development: he passes on the initial concept to his team for digital modelling, then he returns to paper, where he revisits and refines the structure. In this approach, where digital technology extends rather than replaces drawing by hand, drawing remains a space for exploration: thus form takes shape, shape becomes a model, and the model becomes architecture.

THE EMERGENCY ARCHITECT

When disaster strikes, Shigeru Ban is quickly on the scene to take action: "I can't help but react." This commitment dates from 1994, when he proposed cardboard tube shelters to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The following year, after the Kobe earthquake, he created his first emergency structures: *Paper Log Houses*, built on sand-filled beer crates with walls made of cardboard tubes. These were followed by the *Paper Church*. He went on to found the Voluntary Architects' Network (VAN), an NGO that coordinated these interventions. From one region to another, Ban adapts his structures to local needs, climate and available resources. His *Paper Log Houses* were replicated in Turkey and India, while the *Paper Partition System* for ensuring privacy in evacuation centres has been implemented during numerous crises around the world. His emergency architecture is not limited to housing: schools, churches, community centres and concert halls meet other needs.

4.
ASSOCIATED PROGRAM

SPECIAL MASTERCLASS

Shigeru Ban, Balancing Architecture and Social Contribution

By Shigeru Ban
SAT. 05.12.26
Studio | 11:00 am

To mark the opening of the exhibition devoted to his work at the Centre Pompidou-Metz, Shigeru Ban will give an exceptional lecture introducing the achievements of his more than 40-year career as an architect and the reflections that underpin them. He will also reflect on over 30 years of experience in disaster relief.

CONFERENCE

Behind the Scenes of the Shigeru Ban Exhibition

By Marc Ferrand,
Designer Shigeru Ban Architects Europe and the team at the Centre Pompidou-Metz
THU. 28.01.27
Wendel Auditorium | 6.30 pm

CONFERENCE A WORK FOR EACH SUNDAY

Lecture

By Zoe Stillpass, Research Fellow / Curator
SUN. 27.06.27
Gallery 3 | 10.30 am and 11.45 am

THEATRE

Le Tambour de soie – un Nô moderne

By Jean-Claude Carrière, inspired by Yukio Mishima
Directed and choreographed by Kaori Ito and Yoshi Oïda
SAT. 24.04.27
Studio | 8.00 pm

Le Tambour de soie brings together two exceptional artists in a poetic breath: Kaori Ito and Yoshi Oïda. She, a dancer and choreographer, is a prodigy of the international stage. He, aged 93, is a great actor, a longtime collaborator of Peter Brook since the 1970s. After *Yumé* in 2014, they are reunited on stage around a legendary Noh story revisited by Yukio Mishima in 1956, and rewritten for this occasion by the late Jean-Claude Carrière.

In this version of the story, an old man cleaning a theatre stage falls under the spell of a dancer during a rehearsal. She gives him a drum, promising that if he can make it sound, she will be his. But the instrument is merely a silk prop, incapable of producing the slightest sound. Humiliated, the old man walks toward a terrible end, only to return to haunt her. This modern Noh performance blends spoken text and dance sequences, accompanied by traditional instruments and the powerful voice of musician Makoto Yabuki. The minimalist set design, five long curtains with shimmering, moiré effects, allows the body to fully express itself.

YOUNG AUDIENCES

Raffaele Salvoldi

FROM 23.01 TO 05.04.27 | 11:00 AM & 3:00 PM
SAT. SUN. & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
and Fridays at 3:00 pm during Zone B school holidays.

Raffaele Salvoldi's practice explores the fragility of beauty through ephemeral architectures composed of thousands of wooden elements (Kapla blocks), assembled without glue or fixings, in a subtle interplay of balance. At the crossroads of sculpture, performance, and participatory installation, his works take the form of imaginary urban landscapes destined to disappear in a spectacular collapse based on the domino effect. In this workshop, participants will be invited to experience this practice firsthand by building their own Kapla structures, individually and collectively, before learning how to take them apart and accept their disappearance. This experience will allow participants to explore both the technical aspects of construction, balance, and assembly, as well as the psychological dimensions related to destruction, frustration, and letting go. The workshop will thus offer a technical and emotional exploration of the artist's creative process, inviting each participant to reflect on their relationship to creation, the ephemeral, and the acceptance of disappearance.



Photo: © Sara Protti

THE CAPSULE

The Capsule was conceived as an intermediate space, halfway between an exhibition gallery and a workshop, with the public invited to take part in activities related to the museum's programming. A space of great freedom, the Capsule is a place for experimentation, a creative laboratory for guest artists both emergent and established.

FROM THE ASHES I RISE
Juliette Minchin, artist

FROM 05.12.26 TO 28.03.27 | 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM
WED. SAT. SUN. & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

In her work, Juliette Minchin primarily explores the notions of disappearance and transformation of matter through processes of metamorphosis, growth, dissolution, and even destruction. Marking the passage of time, each of her works unfolds as an autonomous temporal sequence, where materials evolve and retain traces of their successive transformations. In her installation presented at the Centre Pompidou-Metz, the artist continues this exploration by examining the properties of coal, a material produced by combustion, which she transforms into a building element through a compression process. Between fragility and solidity, destruction and regeneration, her work questions the cycles of transformation of matter and plays on a fundamental ambiguity: the birth of matter or the disappearance of form—here, the beginning and the end merge into one.



Juliette Minchin, Oculus © Romain Darnaud © Adagp, Paris 2026

ACCESSIBILITY

ARCHITECTURE AS A TOOL FOR DIALOGUE AND INCLUSION

Building on its partnerships with the Metz-Queuleu prison, the Centre Pompidou-Metz is renewing its art mediation training programme for inmates in 2027, drawing in particular on the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World. This project addresses issues of architecture, housing, and construction while continuing to work on self-expression, self-confidence, and the appropriation of artworks.

In parallel, the partnership with France Travail (the French public employment service) continues, notably through the scheme "L'Art d'accéder à l'emploi" (The Art of Accessing Employment).

Aimed at long-term unemployed individuals, this project uses art and cultural mediation as tools to foster personal expression, connection, and skills development. These two initiatives allow us to consider architecture not only as an artistic practice, but also as a starting point for reflecting on our relationship with others, the spaces we inhabit, and how we collectively construct our environment.

THE ART OF SHARING

The "Art de partager" [The art of sharing] programme is part of the Centre Pompidou-Metz's ongoing commitment to accessibility for vulnerable audiences, a policy implemented since 2010. This programme is exclusively for professionals and volunteers working within organisations that support seniors, adults, teenagers, or children experiencing exclusion, disability, physical, social, or economic vulnerability, and who are unfamiliar with cultural institutions. It is based on the mutual commitment of the partner organisation and the Centre Pompidou-Metz, with the latter responsible for creating the necessary conditions for participants to engage with cultural projects and the venue through specific training, guided tours of new exhibitions, networking opportunities, and adapted activities. Above all, it relies on the partner organizations' ability to independently lead their groups, to be comfortable with the museum spaces, and to appropriate the artistic and cultural content offered. Empowered by this autonomy, the partners then become true 'facilitators' of the programme.

MEDIATION TRAINING

The first international collaboration between European prisons within the framework of a cultural project, the Casa di Reclusione Femminile in Venice and the Metz-Queuleu prison are partners in the exhibition Endless Sunday. Maurizio Cattelan and the Centre Pompidou collection. On the one hand, the inmates of the Venice prison wrote numerous texts for the exhibition, compiled into booklets available to visitors. On the other hand, several groups of trainee mediators from the Metz-Queuleu penitentiary were trained by the Centre Pompidou-Metz teams in exhibition mediation. This project is being strengthened and renewed in conjunction with the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World.

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT GROUPS

On the occasion of the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World, numerous partnerships and arts and cultural education (ACE) projects will be developed to enable school and university audiences to explore themes related to Shigeru Ban's work.

Special days exploring architecture from different perspectives

Designed for 360 middle and high school students, four themed days offer complementary perspectives on architecture and the issues it raises. The programme includes: exhibition design through the work of Shigeru Ban, with Stéphane Leroy, Head of Exhibition Design at the Centre Pompidou-Metz; architectural models and the use of low-cost materials, presented by Sébastien Champion, visual arts educator; the relationship between art and law, in partnership with the Departmental Council for Access to Justice at the Metz Court; and finally, an introduction to museum professions, through the involvement of the Centre Pompidou-Metz teams in the creation and day-to-day life of the exhibition.

Building and experimenting from an early age

For 50 primary school students, two special days entitled "Des architectures en tubes de carton" [Architectures in cardboard tubes] will combine architectural discovery and practice, through workshops led by an architect from CAUE 57 (Council of Moselle for Architecture, Urban Planning, and the Environment).

Two iconic architectural styles in dialogue

In partnership with the teaching team of Metz Cathedral, duo visits Deux architectures emblématiques : "Centre Pompidou-Metz / Cathédrale de Metz" [Two emblematic architectures: Centre Pompidou-Metz / Metz Cathedral] will allow 120 primary and secondary school students to compare two architectures from very different periods and to question their specificities.

Collaborations at the heart of architectural and scenographic practice

A major partnership with the École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Nancy (ENSA Nancy) will enable the installation of the *Library of a Poet*, a work created by Shigeru Ban in 1991 and reactivated within the exhibition space. This project will offer students the opportunity to become concretely involved in the implementation of an architectural project.

Another major partnership will involve Master's students in their second year of the Arts of Exhibition and Scenography programme, within the Department of Arts at the University of Lorraine's Faculty of Arts, Literature and Languages in Metz. They will take part in assembling five emergency shelters designed by Shigeru Ban, which will be exhibited in the Forum of the Centre Pompidou-Metz, putting their skills to work on a practical project on a museum-wide scale.



THE CENTRE POMPIDOU-METZ PODCAST

Et si je te raconte... The Centre Pompidou-Metz podcast series takes listeners behind the scenes of its exhibitions through the voices of the people involved in their conception and creation: curators, research officers, exhibition designers, editors, registrars, conservators, and many more.

Next episode: Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World

5.
CATALOGUE

Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World

Spanning forty years of invention, the catalogue extends the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World at the Centre Pompidou-Metz with an in-depth exploration of Shigeru Ban's work and creative process, from his earliest experiments to his most iconic buildings.

Richly illustrated, this definitive work invites readers to immerse themselves in the architect's vision through a lengthy essay by architectural theorist Riichi Miyake on the architect's sources of inspiration and key innovations, as well as a conversation between Shigeru Ban and Chiara Parisi. Recorded day by day as the exhibition was being prepared, this conversation reveals the architect's lifelong curiosity for objects, textures, and the processes of creation. Shigeru Ban himself oversaw the publication accompanying his exhibition, notably drawing on the work of those who inspired him, from Alvar Aalto to John Hejduk, from Frei Otto to Alexander Calder.

Kenya Hara's graphic design, with whom the architect has a long-standing collaboration, imbues the book with the attention to form, materials, and space that characterises their creative exchanges. While revisiting the genesis of the Centre Pompidou-Metz architecture, which serves as the starting point for this work to enter the architect's world, the catalogue echoes a narrative where materials, influences, and actions intertwine, capturing the full scope of Shigeru Ban's thinking.



Éditions du Centre Pompidou-Metz
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Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World (excerpt), [2026]

"Lucid Madness, or the Architect of Compassion"

By Riichi Miyake, Director of the Yoshiro and Yoshio Taniguchi Museum of Architecture, Kanazawa

"It is difficult to write about the work of an architect such as Shigeru Ban. It is not enough to compile an exhaustive list of his projects; one must also understand their social context and the ways in which they are carried out in order to grasp the full complexity of the thinking and techniques that underpin them. The challenge lies in the many facets of Shigeru Ban's personality: his ability to conceive major projects worthy of Chōgen, the Buddhist monk who, in 1181, oversaw the reconstruction of the ancient capital of Nara, devastated by war and fire; the inventive genius of a Brunelleschi, constantly seeking new systems to generate spatial dynamism; and a profound compassion, reminiscent of Mother Teresa, who tirelessly sought to bring a glimmer of hope to people in distress.

Such work demands considerable courage and skill. It is therefore quite fascinating to see two modes of being coexist in Shigeru Ban: on the one hand, he immerses himself in the discontinuous flow of time, abruptly interrupted by disasters and wars; on the other, attuned to our globalised era, he leads a frenetic life of travel that takes him around the world every two months."

6.
PARTNERS

The Centre Pompidou-Metz is the first example of the decentralisation of a major national cultural institution, the Centre Pompidou, in partnership with local authorities. An independent institution, the Centre Pompidou-Metz draws on the experience, expertise and international reputation of its Parisian counterpart. It shares the same values of innovation, generosity, multidisciplinary practice and openness to all audiences.

It also develops partnerships with museum institutions around the world. Complementing its exhibitions, the Centre Pompidou-Metz offers a programme of dance performances, concerts, film screenings and lectures.

It receives the support of Wendel, its founding patron.

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Since its opening in 2010, Wendel has supported Centre Pompidou-Metz. Wendel chose to support this emblematic institution, whose cultural reach extends to the widest possible audience.

In recognition of its longstanding commitment to culture, Wendel was awarded the title of "Grand Mécène de la Culture" (Major Patron of Culture) in 2012.

Wendel is one of Europe's leading publicly listed investment firms. It is a long-term investor, requiring active shareholder engagement that fosters trust, a constant focus on innovation and sustainable development, and investment in promising diversification opportunities.

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Founded in Lorraine in 1704, the Wendel Group developed over 270 years across a range of industries, particularly steelmaking, before turning to long-term investment in the late 1970s.

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BUILDING CONNECTIONS, OPENING NEW HORIZONS

Building a Better World. This ambition, which gives its name to the exhibition dedicated to Shigeru Ban, resonates particularly strongly with the values and mission of the Moselle Department. As a local authority committed to social welfare and territorial cohesion, the Department works every day to build a society that is more caring, more inclusive and more open to the world.

An architect driven by a strong sense of commitment, Shigeru Ban places people at the heart of his work. This vision echoes that of the Department, which firmly believes that building a better future means, above all, caring for others, fostering connections and ensuring that everyone can find their place in society.

Shigeru Ban also has a special connection with Moselle. Together with Jean de Gastines, he designed the Centre Pompidou-Metz, now an iconic architectural and cultural landmark of our region. Through its bold design, this remarkable achievement has helped raise Moselle's profile far beyond its borders and has made a significant contribution to its cultural appeal.

By supporting this exhibition, the Moselle Department reaffirms its commitment to making culture accessible to everyone, everywhere. Acting as a cultural ambassador means enabling as many people as possible to discover works that challenge our understanding of society, stimulate reflection and open up new horizons. For culture is about much more than wonder and inspiration: it brings people together, encourages questioning, builds connections and plays an essential role in shaping a more caring and inclusive world.

Through this partnership, the Moselle Department celebrates a particular vision of commitment: one that puts people first and invites us all to imagine a better world.

The Moselle Department – A Land of Culture.

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An energy provider serving Metz and 141 surrounding municipalities since 1901, UEM Group, a long-standing patron of Centre Pompidou-Metz, is proud to renew its support for the institution through the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World, on view from 5 December 2026 to 30 August 2027.

True to its commitment to promoting and supporting local communities, UEM is delighted to contribute to this remarkable exhibition dedicated to Shigeru Ban – the architect who, together with Jean de Gastines, designed the Centre Pompidou-Metz building, and a recipient of both the Pritzker Prize and the Praemium Imperiale.

With a long-standing commitment to sustainable development, the Group has been particularly drawn to Shigeru Ban's architectural approach and his innovative use of materials. Cardboard, bamboo and recycled wood become the building blocks of an architecture that is at once rational, environmentally conscious and profoundly human.

This exhibition also provides an opportunity to reaffirm UEM's strong ties with Centre Pompidou-Metz, a cultural and artistic institution with national and international reach, and to continue its efforts to make culture accessible to all audiences. In doing so, UEM is contributing, in its own way, to the growing involvement of local stakeholders in the world of art.

ABOUT UEM

UEM is France's leading independent local energy distribution company. It supplies energy to more than 175,000 customers, including 25,000 business customers, and is a key contributor to the local and regional economy. Comprising five entities – UEM, réséda, energem, energeen production and efluid – UEM Group employs more than 850 people.

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Supporting the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World means championing an approach that brings together creativity, innovation and responsibility. Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe is delighted to help bring the public closer to an architect whose work encourages us to look at materials, their uses and the role of architecture in society from a different perspective.

Shigeru Ban demonstrates that architecture can be both bold in its forms and attentive to people's needs. Through his exploration of paper, cardboard, wood and other materials used in innovative ways, he is constantly expanding the possibilities of construction. His work goes beyond iconic buildings: it also offers solutions in emergency situations, where ease of implementation and consideration for people's needs become essential. This ability to develop innovative solutions in response to real-world constraints gives his work a distinctive resonance within contemporary architecture.

The exhibition reminds us that creating also means questioning the way we inhabit the world and how we can better respond to the changes taking place around us. Through its environmentally responsible approach, based on the inventive use of materials and a keen awareness of people's needs, Shigeru Ban's work resonates with Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe's own commitments to environmental responsibility, local engagement and solidarity.

This patronage takes on particular significance at Centre Pompidou-Metz, whose building was designed by Shigeru Ban in collaboration with Jean de Gastines. By supporting this exhibition, Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe is delighted to contribute to this encounter between an artistic vision, a major cultural institution and all those who will come to discover it.

About Caisse D'epargne Grand Est Europe

A leading banking institution, Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe remains true to its cooperative and social values and is firmly committed to the region it serves, maintaining close relationships with its customers. It supports innovative projects and contributes every day to the economic, social, community-focused and environmental development of the territories in which it operates. As a major financial partner of the regional economy – supporting businesses, professionals, local authorities, associations and social housing initiatives – Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe draws on the expertise of 2,478 employees, serving 1.277 million customers, including 320,000 cooperative shareholders, and managing €2 billion in equity capital. Headquartered in Strasbourg, Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe operates across all the departments of France's Grand Est administrative region. It also has administrative offices in Metz, Reims and Nancy. Caisse d'Epargne Grand Est Europe is part of Groupe BPCE. www.caisse-epargne.fr/grand-est-europe

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7.
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Wall-less House, Nagano, Japan, 1997 / Photo: © Hiroyuki Hirai



Cardboard Cathedral, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2013 / Photo: © Stephen Goodenough



Blue Ocean Dome, Osaka, Japan, 2025 / Photo: © Hiroyuki Hirai



Paper Log House, Kobe, Japan, 1995 / Photo: © Takanobu Sakuma



Shigeru Ban, *Library of a Poet*, Zushi, Japan, 1991
Structure made of paper tubes
Photo: © Hiroyuki Hirai



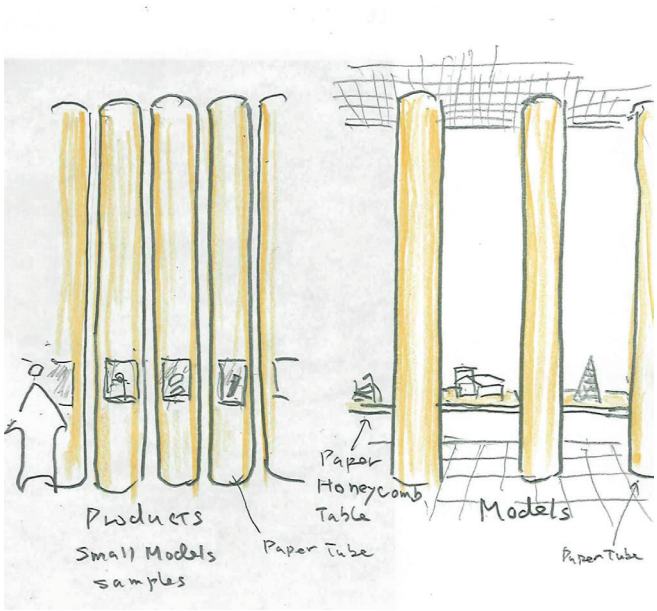
Zenbo Seinei, Meditation Pavilion, Awaji, Japan, 2022 / Photo: © Hiroyuki Hirai



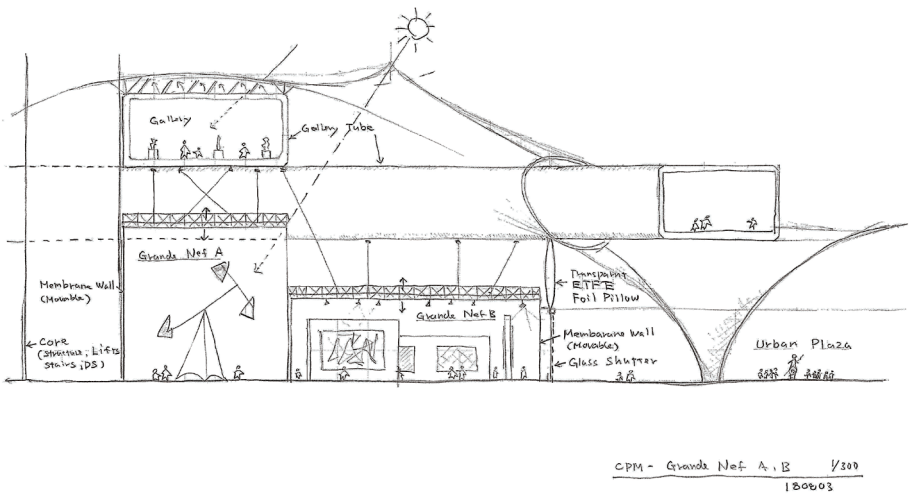
Paper Temporary School / Chengdu Hualin Elementary School, Chengdu, China, 2008 / Photo: © Li Jun



Paper Temporary Studio, Paris, France, 2004–2010 /
Paper Tube Studio (PTS), Metz, France, since 2020
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Sketch for the exhibition Shigeru Ban. Building a Better World / Credit: Shigeru Ban



Sketch for the Centre Pompidou-Metz / Credit: Shigeru Ban

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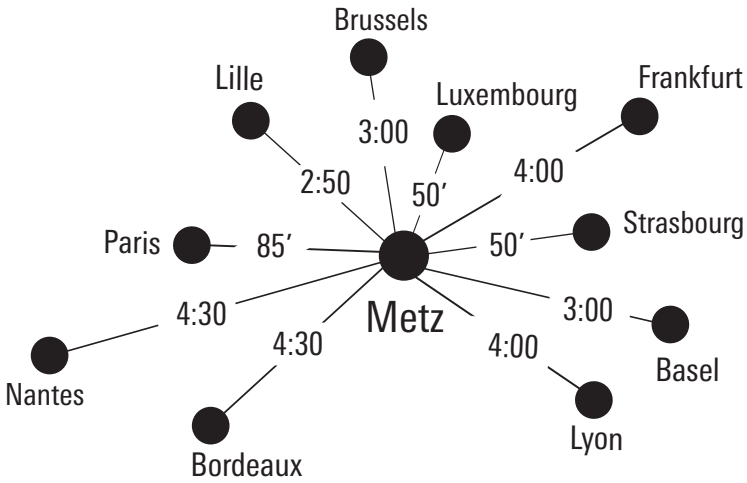
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